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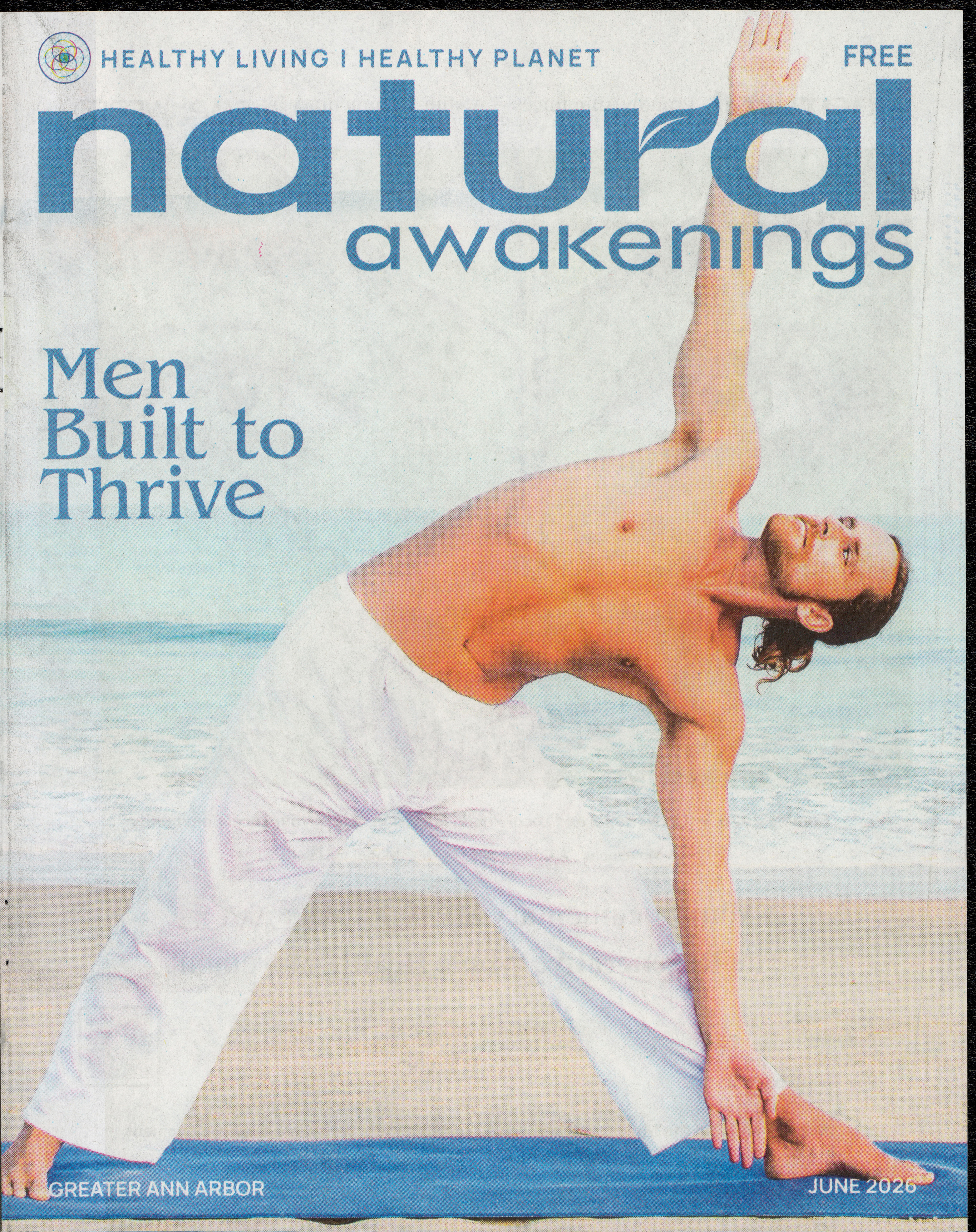

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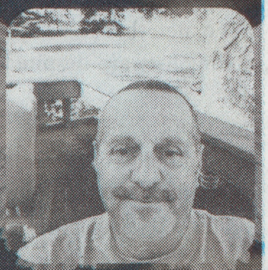

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The Quiet Strength of Men

There's a unique kind of strength found in good men. It's not always loud or attention-seeking. More often, it's steady, dependable and quietly present in the everyday moments that hold families, friendships and communities together. It's found in the men that show up, protect, provide, encourage and continue moving forward despite life's many challenges.

This month, we take time to honor the men among us—the fathers, grandfathers, sons, brothers, husbands, friends and mentors whose lives reflect courage, integrity and heart. In a world that often celebrates outward achievement and constant noise, we believe there is something deeply meaningful about the quiet strength of a man that leads with compassion, humility and purpose.

True masculinity is not measured simply by physical strength or success, but by character. It's revealed in the willingness to love deeply, to stand firm in difficult moments and to offer guidance, protection and support to others. Some of the strongest men are those that listen carefully, work tirelessly, remain patient through hardship and continue giving of themselves even when no recognition is expected.

As publishers, John and I have had the privilege of meeting many extraordinary men throughout our communities over the years. We have witnessed fathers devoted to their families, veterans carrying wisdom shaped through sacrifice, healers and practitioners helping others restore balance and men courageously redefining what it means to live with authenticity and emotional strength. These examples remind us that kindness and resilience can coexist beautifully.

At the same time, we recognize that many men today are navigating tremendous pressure and uncertainty. The demands of modern life can leave little room for rest, reflection or vulnerability. Yet wellness—physical, emotional and spiritual—is essential for everyone. We encourage the men in our lives to care for themselves with the same dedication they so often extend to others.

Sometimes the greatest act of strength is allowing space for healing, connection and renewal.

This issue is dedicated to honoring healthy masculinity in all of its forms and celebrating the men that continue striving to become their best selves while uplifting those around them. We hope these pages inspire meaningful conversations, deeper understanding and a greater appreciation for the important role men play in creating stronger families and healthier communities.

To all the good men quietly making a difference every day: thank you. Your presence matters more than you may ever realize.

With gratitude and appreciation,

Trina & John

HEALTHY LIVING HEALTHY PLANET

natural awakenings

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Advertising & Submissions

Natural Awakenings is a network of natural lifestyle magazine publishers empowering local communities with knowledge, resources and connections to lead healthier lives on a healthy planet.

Chemical-Free Mold Remediation Supports Healthier Homes

MoldPro is celebrating 15 years of providing chemical-free mold remediation services for residents and businesses throughout Washtenaw County. Based in Milan, the company continues helping property owners address mold concerns while focusing on healthier indoor environments and remediation methods that avoid harsh chemicals.

MoldPro assists homeowners and businesses dealing with mold growth caused by moisture intrusion, humidity issues and water damage. Its chemical-free remediation approach supports indoor air quality while offering an alternative to traditional methods that rely on strong chemical agents and lingering odors. The company's services also support households with children, pets and individuals sensitive to harsh cleaning products.

Indoor air quality continues drawing greater attention as property owners become more aware of how hidden mold growth can affect living and working conditions. MoldPro continues encouraging early remediation efforts to help prevent mold issues from spreading and causing additional property concerns.

The 15-year milestone reflects the company's ongoing relationship with local customers, business partners and community members throughout the region. MoldPro credits community trust and continued support for helping the company reach the anniversary while continuing its work to create cleaner and healthier indoor spaces.

Location: 247 W. Main St., Milan. For more information or to schedule an inspection, call 734-439-8800 or visit MoldProllc.com. *See ad page 31.*

Natural Therapies and Detoxification Programs Support Restorative Wellness

Patients looking beyond conventional treatment models are finding alternative wellness strategies through the naturopathic services offered at Dynamic Health. The Ann Arbor practice uses individualized therapies and whole-body evaluations designed to help patients improve physical function and better understand chronic health concerns through noninvasive care approaches.

Dr. Cousino incorporates nutritional, botanical and homeopathic remedies tailored to each patient's needs rather than relying on medications intended only to suppress symptoms. The clinic evaluates detoxification pathways, organ function and energetic imbalances that may contribute to fatigue, discomfort and long-term wellness challenges.

Several specialized assessment methods are used as part of patient evaluations, including Electroacupuncture According to Voll (EAV), which measures bioenergetic feedback from meridian points located on the hands and feet. Quantum Reflex Analysis, commonly referred to as muscle testing, is also used to identify stress patterns and areas of imbalance throughout the body. Additional services include infrared regulation thermometry and pelotherapy, also known as mud packing, to support restorative wellness and detoxification programs.

Rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach, the clinic gradually introduces therapies after assessing the body's ability to process and eliminate toxins effectively. Through supportive care and customized wellness strategies, Dynamic Health works to help patients improve resilience, energy and healthier daily function over time.

Location: 6360 Jackson Rd., Ste. M, Ann Arbor. For more information or to make an appointment, call 734-997-9400 or visit DynamicHealthServices.com.

Integrative Therapies Help Ann Arbor Patients Improve Mobility and Comfort

Families across the Ann Arbor area are exploring natural approaches to pain management and preventive care through the services offered at Holistic Healing and Chiropractic Center. Founded in 2012, the practice combines chiropractic adjustments with holistic therapies intended to support mobility, nervous system health and long-term physical wellness.

Dr. Sarah Wilkinson and Dr. Eric Zatkin focus on how spinal alignment influences communication between the brain and body. Their chiropractic approach is designed to help reduce tension, improve movement and support the body's natural healing abilities through gentle adjustments and individualized care plans.

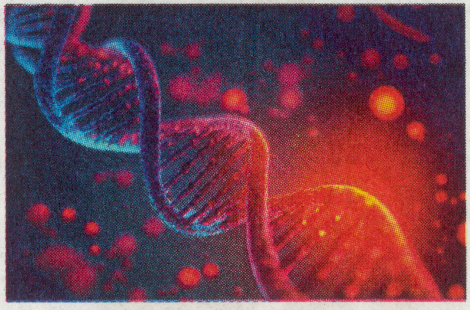
The center provides services for both people and pets, including massage therapy, craniosacral therapy, Nutrition Response Testing, PEMF, dolphin neurostim, ionic foot baths and neuro intensive therapies. Onsite X-rays and class 2 and class 4 laser therapy further support personalized treatment planning and recovery strategies tailored to each patient's condition and goals.

Patient education and preventive wellness remain central to the practice's philosophy of care. Wilkinson and Zatkin encourage

individuals to take an active role in maintaining long-term health through movement, natural therapies and lifestyle support designed to improve resilience and everyday function.

Location: 283 S. Zeeb Rd., Ste. M, Ann Arbor. For more information or to make an appointment, call 734-369-2032 or visit HolisticHealingAnnArbor.com.

Precision Medicine Programs Offer Personalized Prevention Strategies



Advanced diagnostics and genomics-based testing are shaping the patient care model at Natural Balance Wellness Medical Center in Ann Arbor. The clinic combines functional medicine evaluations with precision medicine strategies intended to help patients better understand chronic symptoms, long-term health risks and individualized prevention opportunities.

Many patients arrive after years of searching for answers to persistent or difficult-to-manage health concerns. Through genomic analysis and comprehensive functional testing, doctors Boggess, Basinger and Baade create wellness plans tailored to each patient's biological profile, health history and long-term goals.

Condition-specific functional medicine programs at the clinic incorporate nutrition counseling, lifestyle guidance and wellness education for individuals seeking alternatives to conventional healthcare models. Preventive wellness services are also designed to help patients improve energy, resilience and vitality before more serious disease develops.

Families seeking biomedical wellness support for children with autism spectrum disorders, ADHD and related neurodevelopmental conditions also turn to the clinic for educational and collaborative care strategies intended to support healthier long-term outcomes.

Location: 1601 Briarwood Cir., Ste. 475, Ann Arbor. For more information or to make an appointment, call 734-929-2696 or visit NbWellness.com.

Hormone And Regenerative Therapies Support Healthy Aging and Recovery

Physician-guided wellness care remains at the center of the services offered through RegenCen, in Ann Arbor. The practice provides hormone therapy and regenerative medicine treatments intended to help patients improve vitality, recovery and long-term health while navigating changing wellness needs associated with aging.

Chief Medical Officer Gustav Lo, M.D., brings more than 30 years of experience in primary care and functional medicine to the practice.

RegenCen providers receive ongoing training in hormone replacement therapy, menopause medicine and medically supervised weight-loss treatments to ensure evidence-based and individualized care.

Services include menopause and perimenopause treatment, testosterone replacement therapy, medically supervised weight loss, NAD+ therapy, vaginal rejuvenation, PRF joint injections, IV therapy, sexual wellness support and hair thinning solutions. The clinic also specializes in regenerative therapies intended to support mobility, energy and physical recovery.

Location: 315 E. Eisenhower Pkwy., Ste. 8, Ann Arbor. For more info or to make an appointment, call 734-794-3786 or visit RegenCen.com.

Local Food Initiative Expands Access Through Community Marketplace

Agricole Farm Stop announces Agri-Fest, to take place from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., June 20, on Jackson Street in downtown Chelsea. The free community marketplace highlights local food, art and small-scale agriculture while raising funds for the Our Neighbor's Basket initiative, a program that provides weekly CSA meal kits to Chelsea residents through a trust-based sliding-scale model.

Agricole Farm Stop focuses on increasing access to fresh, nutrient-dense food while supporting local farmers through direct compensation for their harvests. According to Store Manager Shana Weddington, the Our Neighbor's Basket initiative raised $5,000 last year to help launch the program, and the organization now works toward a 2026 fundraising goal of $7,000. Weddington says the funding allows the program to provide fresh food baskets to eight households each week for the remainder of the year.

Agri-Fest transforms Jackson Street, outside Agricole's north entrance, into a pedestrian marketplace featuring local farmers, makers and artists. Agricole Farm Stop currently seeks 11 vendors for the event. Available spaces include 10-by-10-foot parking spot pop-ups and 6-by-4-foot sidewalk window bays. Vendor participation requires a $50 fundraising donation.

Location: 118 N. Main St., Chelsea. Prospective vendors and community members interested in additional information may contact Shana Weddington at Shana@AgricoleFarmStop.com or Melanie Zimmerman at Melanie@AgricoleFarmStop.com. See ad page 27.

Fasting Supports GLP-1 Weight-Loss

Intermittent fasting and GLP-1 medications continue to gain attention as effective tools for weight loss and metabolic health. Medications such as semaglutide and tirzepatide help regulate appetite, while intermittent fasting creates structured eating windows that may support calorie control and healthier habits. Together, these approaches may improve weight management for some adults struggling with obesity and related health concerns. According to National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey data, more than 42 percent of U.S. adults have obesity, highlighting the growing need for sustainable treatment strategies.

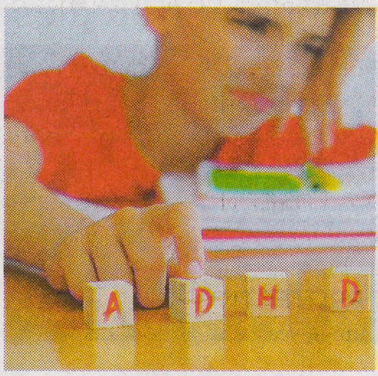
Intermittent fasting focuses on when a person eats rather than what foods are consumed. Eating is limited to designated hours during the day, followed by periods of fasting. Research suggests this approach may improve insulin sensitivity, metabolic flexibility and inflammation levels in some individuals. GLP-1 medications complement fasting by reducing hunger signals and slowing gastric emptying, helping people feel fuller longer and reducing cravings between meals. A recent study published through the National Institutes of Health also supports the growing role of GLP-1 therapies in weight management and metabolic health.

Medical professionals emphasize that GLP-1 medications and intermittent fasting are not appropriate for everyone and should be approached carefully. Adequate hydration, balanced nutrition and proper vitamin and mineral intake remain essential throughout treatment. Ongoing medical supervision may also help reduce side effects and improve long-term success.

At Wycoff Wellness Center, in East Lansing, patients receive individualized guidance on intermittent fasting and GLP-1 therapies designed to support long-term weight-loss success. The practice emphasizes thoughtful medical supervision, healthy lifestyle habits and personalized treatment plans to help patients safely achieve their wellness goals.

Location: 1226 Michigan Ave., East Lansing. For more information, call 517-333-7270 or visit WycoffWellness.com. See ad on back cover.

ADHD and Other Disabilities Share Genetic Origins



A 2025 study in *Psychological Science* looked at how shared genetic and environmental factors might affect the chance of having attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia (trouble with reading) and dyscalculia (trouble with math) at the same time. The scientists used data from the Netherlands Twin Register involving approximately 19,000 twins and 2,000 siblings, analyzing teacher-provided information and standardized test scores at ages 7 and 10.

The study showed that 77.3 percent of the children had only one of these specific conditions, but the risk for multiple conditions was two to three times more likely because the three conditions share similar genetic predispositions, not because one disorder causes another. Researchers also found that about 37 percent of children with ADHD also had dyslexia or dyscalculia, reinforcing how commonly these conditions overlap. The findings suggest that early screening for learning difficulties in children with ADHD may help schools and families provide more targeted academic support. The researchers noted that although these neurodevelopmental conditions are deeply connected, each condition should be assessed and treated separately because treating one condition is unlikely to automatically improve the others.

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Eco Tip

Sustainable Men's Fashion

by Natural Awakenings *staff*

The eco-conscious gentleman seeks to conserve resources, reduce waste and break free from consumerism. When building his wardrobe, he favors quality over quantity, rejecting fast fashion in favor of well-made garments, sustainable fabrics and timeless designs.

Eco-Friendly Fabrics

Synthetic materials like polyester, nylon and acrylic are derived from fossil fuels, take centuries to biodegrade and release harmful microplastics during washing. They have no place in an evolved wardrobe. Better fabrics come from renewable sources grown without chemicals or pesticides, such as organic cotton, linen, hemp, bamboo and responsibly sourced merino wool.

Look for the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) certification, which ensures environmentally and socially responsible manufacturing, including crop rotation for soil health, a prioritization of rainwater over irrigation and fair wages for workers. This certification applies to all textiles made from at least 70 percent non-GMO certified organic natural fibers.

To replace leather—one of the least sustainable materials—innovative plant-based alternatives are emerging, such as Piñatex from pineapple leaves and wood pulp or mycelium-based fabrics made from mushrooms. Recycled polyester (rPET) from melted plastic bottles spun into yarn helps reduce landfill waste. Approximately nine bottles are needed to make one T-shirt.

TENCEL Lyocell, made with wood from responsibly managed forests, is produced with 50 percent lower carbon emissions and water consumption than similar fabrics. This soft, breathable, moisture-wicking and durable material is used in T-shirts, activewear, eco-friendly denim, tailored trousers and underwear.

Pixel-Shot/Shutterstock

Examples of Mindful Clothing Brands

Knowledge Cotton Apparel (*KnowledgeCottonApparel.com*) offers basic wardrobe pieces made with organic cotton, linen, TENCEL, wool, denim and corduroy.

Toad&Co (*ToadAndCo.com*) uses third-party-certified sustainable fabrics, aims to eliminate all plastic-based packaging by 2026 and purchases carbon offsets supporting global environmental projects.

MUD Jeans (*MudJeans.com*) rescues old jeans headed for the landfill and shreds, cleans and weaves new yarn for a fresh pair. Their methods save water and energy, avoid harsh chemicals and reduce CO2 emissions. Consumers can send old jeans for discounts on future purchases.

Tentree (*TenTree.com*) makes its products out of TENCEL Lyocell, organic cotton or recycled polyester, focusing on reducing wastewater and emissions. They also plant 10 trees for every item purchased.

How to Curate a Sustainable Wardrobe

Prioritize durable construction. Choose robust, tightly woven materials like denim and canvas for longevity. Look for metal zippers and secured buttons.

Maintain clothes for longevity. Air-dry to prevent heat damage and tumbling wear. Wash less frequently to preserve fabric integrity. Repair small holes or loose threads promptly. Avoid harsh detergents or fabric softener.

Choose core essentials. Concentrate on 15 to 20 high-quality, versatile items in neutral tones (navy, grey, beige, white, black) that can be mixed and matched for various occasions. Include a tailored blazer, dark jeans, solid-colored T-shirts, buttoned shirts, one or two knitwear pieces, neutral chinos, tailored trousers, white sneakers, loafers and a pair of boots.

Detoxify to Heal

Why Clearing Toxins is Important When Fighting Cancer

Environmental toxins—from heavy metals to chlorinated water—contribute to oxidative stress and DNA damage. Detoxifying safely is therefore crucial for recovery.

Zeolite Enhanced with DHQ not only is one of *CancerFightingStrategies.com* top cancer fighters. It also binds and removes heavy metals and chemical residues from the body. There are many binders that can remove toxins from the body. But Zeolite Enhanced with DHQ is by far the best binder that can kill cancer cells too.

If you have cancer and have been getting chemotherapy and immunotherapy treatments, it is vital to support the liver so you can better handle their toxins. Otherwise the liver becomes used up trying to process all these toxins and cannot detoxify them. When this happens, they build up in your body and make you sick, weak, nauseous or cause other symptoms to develop. They can damage the kidneys and heart too, along with causing chemo brain.

Liver Balance Plus and Kidney Rescue support the body's detox pathways through herbs, vitamins and amino acids. Together, they help the liver and kidneys eliminate toxins more efficiently.

OxyDHQ complements this process by improving circulation and oxygenation, aiding tissue repair. Switching to purified or ozonated water, organic foods and natural body-care products further reduces toxic load.

CancerFightingStrategies.com has these and other detox recommendations and cancer fighting recommendations. A cleaner internal environment allows immune cells and enzymes to function properly, enhancing treatment response and vitality. Detoxification isn't a single event—it's a lifestyle of supporting the body's natural elimination systems so health can flourish.

Location: Grand Rapids, Michigan. For more information, visit CancerFightingStrategies.com. See ad on this page.

Disclaimer: These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. The products and information contained herein are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any diseases or medical problems. It is not intended to replace your doctor's recommendations. The information is provided for educational purposes only. Nutritional benefits may vary from one person to another.

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Advertorial

The Facts About Low Testosterone

What Every Man Should Know

by Marlaina Donato

Testosterone replacement therapy (TRT), available as injections, patches, gels, pills and implant pellets, was a global market worth nearly $2 billion in 2022, and is projected to reach nearly $3 billion by 2032, according to Allied Market Research. Yet TRT is often misused for symptoms like fatigue or for athletic enhancement, when it is actually meant to treat clinically diagnosed low testosterone.

While this pivotal sex hormone is responsible for male puberty, sperm production and healthy libido, it also acts as a critical metabolic regulator and driving force behind physical energy, healthy muscle mass, bone density, red blood cell production and mood regulation. When men experience a decline in performance—whether at work, in the gym or in the bedroom—it may be easy to assume that low testosterone levels are to blame, but the misuse or overuse of TRT places users at risk for undesirable side effects.

According to the Mayo Clinic, the potential risks of TRT include: worsening sleep apnea; skin reactions, including acne; noncancerous growth of the prostate and growth of an existing prostate cancer; enlargement of the breasts; a reduction of sperm production; and overproduction of red blood cells, which could lead to a life-threatening pulmonary embolism. In addition, according to a 2018 study in the *World Journal of Men's Health*, TRT can cause infertility.

Reaching the Correct Diagnosis

The American Urological Association defines low testosterone as a total blood serum level below 300 nanograms per deciliter (ng/dL) on at least two separate early morning tests, accompanied by symptoms like low sex drive and performance, fatigue, loss of muscle mass, increased body fat and depression.

"Many men are seeking TRT to treat nonspecific symptoms like general fatigue, weight gain or a slight dip in motivation—issues that are often the result of lifestyle factors, rather than low testosterone," says Dr. Joel Fuhrman, president of the Nutritional Research Foundation and the author of several books, including *Eat for Life* and *Eat to Live Cookbook*. In light of the trend of TRT over-prescription and the considerable risks, Fuhrman stresses the importance of considering effective natural methods to restore hormonal balance.

Men can experience a decline in their testosterone levels for reasons beyond testosterone deficiency. "Thyroid problems, vitamin D deficiency, high prolactin [hormone], chronic stress, certain medications, opioids and antidepressants all suppress testosterone or mimic its symptoms. Run a full panel before assuming it's your testosterone. You might be chasing the wrong problem," advises Nelson Vergel, a hormone therapy researcher, men's health educator and creator of *ExcelMale.com*, an online men's health and TRT forum.

Vergel highlights the devastating effects of chronic unresolved stress, which "tells the brain to dial back testosterone production. It's a survival mechanism; your body

prioritizes threat-response over reproduction. It makes sense in the short term, but it's devastating long-term."

"The men I've seen most vital in their 60s and 70s are the ones who didn't accept decline as inevitable."

Raymond Wohl, the medical director of Chicago Male Clinic in Chicago, Illinois, says, "A decline in performance, libido or confidence is often an early warning sign of underlying issues such as elevated stress, reduced blood flow, hormonal imbalance or metabolic dysfunction." Men are often surprised to discover that improvements in energy, sleep, weight management and mood frequently accompany enhanced sexual performance. Wohl emphasizes, "Sexual health is not separate—it's a powerful indicator of total wellness. We recommend TRT only after a thorough evaluation, including lab work, symptom analysis and lifestyle review."

Functional medicine specialist and men's health coach Dr. Andreas Boettcher, in Lakewood Ranch, Florida, also recommends a comprehensive approach. "You need to look at the full hormonal picture, including cortisol patterns across the day; levels of DHEA-sulfate, pregnenolone, estradiol and prolactin; thyroid function, including free T3 conversion; and insulin markers," he explains, naming multiple hormones besides testosterone.

Addressing the gut-hormone axis—the network involving the gastrointestinal tract, gut microbiome and endocrine system—is also high on Boettcher's radar. "Hormone metabolism, balance and excretion are deeply dependent on your gut," he points out. "The gut microbiome influences the signaling of virtually every hormone in the body, but the gut-hormone axis is a two-way communication highway, and when it breaks down—through gut permeability, dysbiosis [imbalance of gut flora] or chronic inflammation, hormone balance becomes nearly impossible to achieve, regardless of what else you do."

Boettcher attests that approximately 80 percent of men receiving hormonal support no longer need TRT once the underlying factors are adequately addressed. Given the right environment, he explains, the endocrine system begins production at levels that restore vitality, energy, lean muscle mass and libido. During his mid-to-late 40s, Boettcher quadrupled his testosterone

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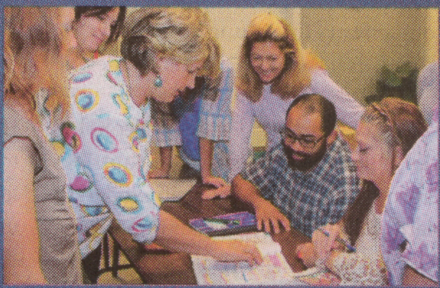

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levels without resorting to TRT or shortcuts. Now approaching 60, he maintains a single-digit body fat percentage, which he attributes to consistent daily choices. He asserts that men are biologically designed to be lean, strong and metabolically healthy well into the latter half of life.

Testosterone Disruptors and Supporters

Vergel reports that a significant portion of his patients that were convinced they had low testosterone turned out to have undiagnosed sleep apnea. "Just one week of sleeping only five hours a night drops testosterone by 10 to 15 percent in otherwise healthy men," he says. "That's not trivial. Everything else you're doing—diet, training or supplements—gets undermined if you're chronically sleep-deprived. Fix the sleep, and testosterone often comes back on its own."

Psychological factors should also be considered. "Men who have carried unaddressed trauma for years often look hormonally like someone 15 to 20 years older with lower testosterone, lower DHEA [a testosterone precursor], disrupted sleep and blunted growth hormone," says Vergel. "No dose of TRT fully compensates for an unresolved psychological load. You have to work both sides."

Boettcher emphasizes the role of alcohol as an underestimated and significant contributor to hormonal anomalies. "Even moderate, consistent alcohol consumption impairs liver function, and your liver is the primary site of estrogen clearance," he explains. "Disrupt that clearance and estrogen accumulates, testosterone declines and the hormonal balance tips in exactly the wrong direction."

Boettcher also highlights the potential damage caused by Ibuprofen, a common over-the-counter medication. Over time, chronic use can damage the gut lining, impair nutrient absorption and disrupt the raw materials the body needs to produce hormones.

Before making a lifelong commitment to hormone therapy, Fuhrman believes that most men can significantly improve their bioavailable testosterone levels by reducing body fat. "Adipose tissue contains high levels of the enzyme aromatase, which converts your existing testosterone into estrogen. Losing weight keeps your natural testosterone in circulation."

He recommends resistance training, specifically compound movements such as squats, deadlifts, bench presses and curls to trigger a metabolic and hormonal signaling environment. He also suggests a diet rich in green salads and vegetables, including broccoli, kale and arugula; polyphenol-rich foods such as beans to promote a healthy gut microbiome; and omega-3-rich nuts and seeds (walnuts, chia, flax and sesame seeds) to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and cognitive decline.

Vergel cautions against ultra-processed food and excessive sugar consumption, which contribute to abdominal fat accumulation. He emphasizes the importance of clean protein and healthy dietary fats. "Don't fear fat," he remarks. "Testosterone is synthesized from cholesterol, so olive oil, eggs, avocados and quality meat protein aren't your enemies."

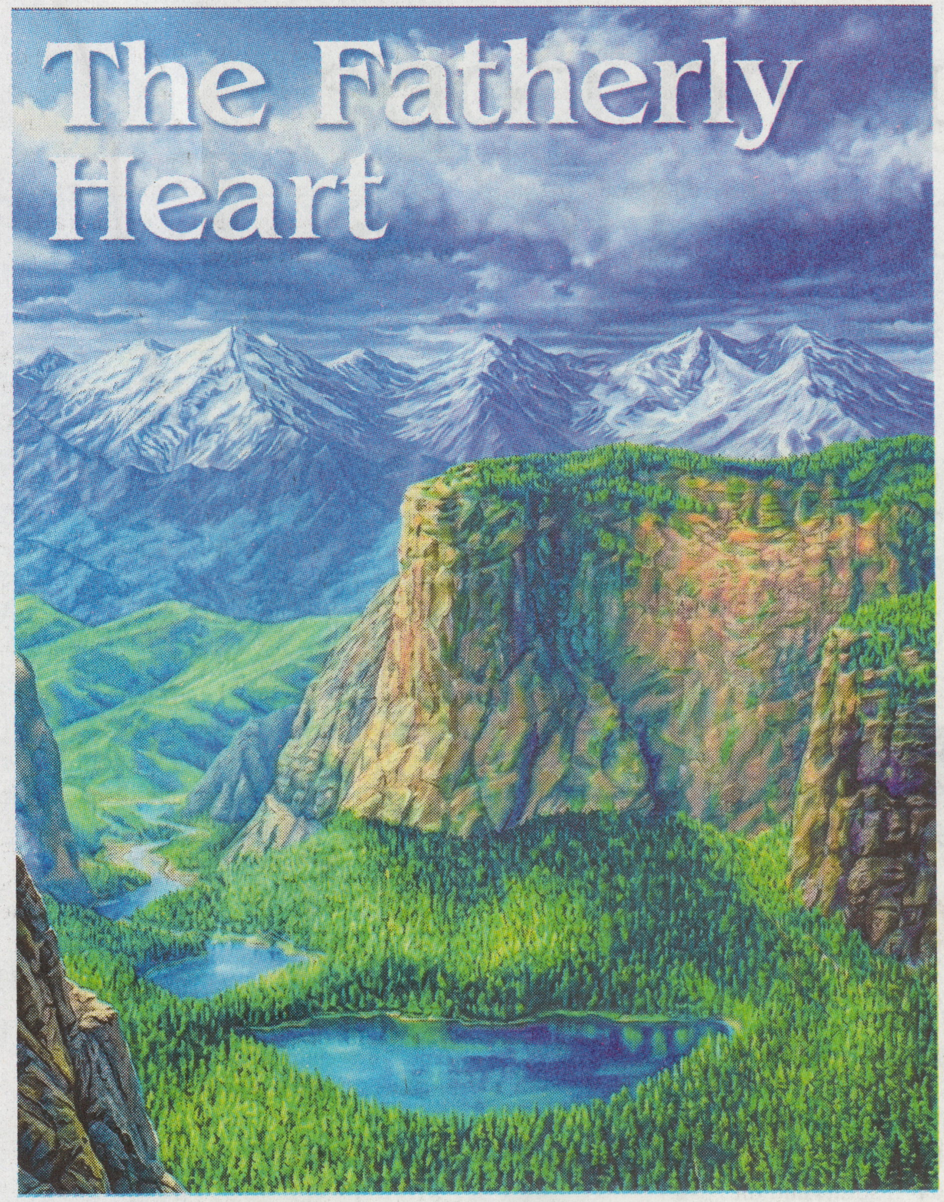
Vitality at Any Age

Ultimately, feeling well enough to live life to the fullest is not exclusive to a fortunate few. Vergel asserts, "The men I've seen most vital in their 60s and 70s are the ones who didn't accept decline as inevitable. They asked questions, found good doctors and stayed in the game."

Wohl offers hope and inspiration, saying, "Aging is inevitable, but decline is not. Sexual health does not have an expiration date. With the right interventions, men can maintain, and often regain, high levels of vitality well into later decades. Our oldest patient is 84 and still thriving."

Marlaina Donato is an author, painter and composer. Connect at WildflowersAndWoodsmoke.com.

The Fatherly Heart



Matthew Fox Explores Masculinity Through Spiritual Archetypes and Creation Spirituality

For more than 50 years, theologian, writer and educator Matthew Fox has challenged traditional interpretations of Christianity through teachings centered on spirituality, environmental justice and social equality. Fox entered the Dominican order in 1960 and later became widely known for advocating equality for women, acceptance of homosexuality and ecological responsibility within spiritual practice. His theological views led to ex-communication by the Vatican in 1993.

Fox's 1983 book *Original Blessing* received international attention for rejecting the doctrine of original sin in favor of a theology rooted in compassion, creativity and the sacred value of all life. Over the decades, Fox became known as a leading voice in Creation Spirituality, a movement emphasizing humanity's relationship with nature, mysticism and social transformation. His work draws from Christian mysticism, Indigenous wisdom traditions, medieval theology and contemporary ecological thought. The archbishop of Canterbury once described Fox as a "green prophet" because of his environmental teachings and spiritual activism.

In *The Hidden Spirituality of Men: Ten Metaphors to Awaken the Sacred Masculine*, Fox examines 10 archetypes of authentic masculinity drawn from mythology, spirituality and human history. The book explores metaphors including Father Sky, the Green Man, Icarus and Daedalus, Hunter-Gatherer, Spiritual Warriors, Earth Father and the Grandfatherly Heart. Fox argues that many modern men grow disconnected from spirituality through rigid cultural expectations, materialism and systems that separate masculinity from emotional depth, creativity and compassion.

Several of the archetypes reconnect masculinity with nature and community. Fox describes the Green Man as an ancient symbol of humanity's bond with the natural world and presents the Spiritual Warrior as a figure guided not by domination, but by love, justice and protection of the vulnerable. The book also revisits the Greek myth of Icarus and Daedalus as a lesson about balancing imagination with grounded daily life rather than living only in abstraction or routine.

The book includes chapters examining the sacred relationship between masculine and feminine energies, along with practical exercises intended to encourage reflection, wisdom and rites of passage grounded in nature and community rather than material consumption. Fox writes that these archetypes offer ways for both men and women to better understand masculine qualities within themselves while cultivating a healthier spiritual identity.

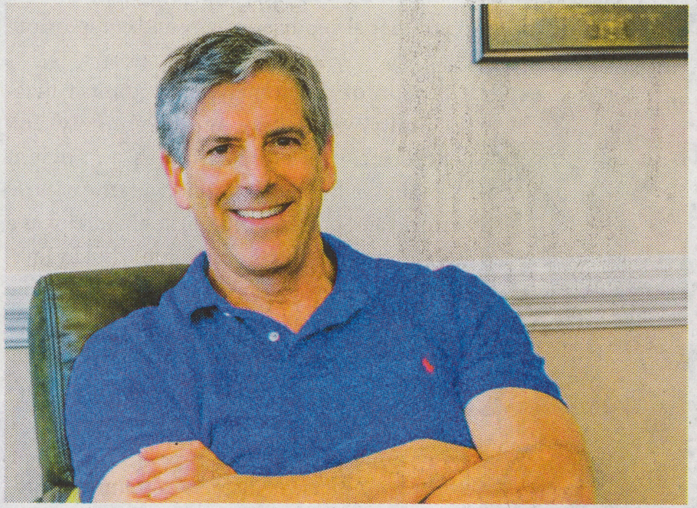
Charles Pippi Barbieri, an Ann Arbor-based educator and consultant known for teaching English as a Second Language, plans to begin a bimonthly reading group on the book this fall. Barbieri worked with Ann Arbor Public Schools Adult Education and Washtenaw Community College and holds academic degrees in biology and environmental advocacy.

Matthew Fox publishes daily reflections and meditations through DailyMeditationsWithMatthewFox.org. For more info or to join the reading group, email PippiBarbieri@gmail.com.

Meaning and Hope in Troubled Times

A Conversation With Jeffrey Rubin

by Sandra Yeyati



Jeffrey Rubin, Ph.D., is a psychoanalyst and a pioneering expert in meditative psychotherapy, which integrates Western psychotherapeutic modalities with Eastern meditative traditions. In practice since 1978, he treats patients in New York City and North Salem, New York. Rubin is an international lecturer and keynote speaker, as well as a faculty member at The American Institute of Psychoanalysis, The Object Relations Institute and the C.G. Jung Institute of New York. An author of eight books and numerous articles, his latest works include *Meditative Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis: Pathways to Healing and Transformation* and *Psychotherapy Case Studies: Escaping the Prison You Didn't Know You Were In.*

What are the strengths and weaknesses of psychotherapy?

In most schools of Western psychotherapy, the emphasis is on identifying and addressing what is wrong with people. In my book *The Good Life* I explain that we need a double focus—not just looking at what challenges us, but also exploring our untapped potential.

Psychotherapy is a search for meaning and self-awareness, as well as an inquiry into relationships as a vehicle for self-transformation. These are its strengths. In therapy, relationships tend to be carefully described and understood, looking into the complexities and obstacles.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of meditation?

Even if you practice with 100 people, meditation offers less insight into relationships compared to psychotherapy. It doesn't focus on meaning. A woman once told me in therapy, "I don't want to travel to Tibet to learn about Buddhism," then paused, "I said 'don't'—is that a Freudian slip? Maybe I'm going to Tibet only because my boyfriend wants to go." A meditation teacher would dismiss her slip as a glitch, while a psychotherapist might see it as symptomatic. As an adult, you have to learn to distinguish between symptoms and glitches, and one of the dangers of meditation is that you often stay on the surface of things.

As for strengths, meditation teaches you to greet the present moment freshly with minimal biases, minimal expectations, maximal openness and the innocence of a child. Meditation also reduces self-criticism, and fosters self-compassion and acceptance.

What is meditative psychotherapy?

It is what I call the marriage of mindfulness and meaning. You need to be present and centered like a meditative discipline teaches, while also willing to investigate and inquire into things. Analyzing your feelings is difficult if you're emotionally reactive. Meditation allows you to explore emotions, delve deeper, form thoughts and notice details. I call this "expanding inner space." Inner space is not a place, but a capacity that you develop to become centered, reflect and broaden your perspective. Once you cultivate this capacity, psychotherapeutic investigation becomes easier.

What symptoms are you seeing more often in therapy sessions?

Greater alienation, powerlessness and loneliness. People are overwhelmed, foggy-headed and frazzled. As we face relentless tough news cycles, economic uncertainty and social divisions, people act like pinballs in a machine, ricocheting off walls and lashing out with road rage and impatience towards loved ones.

I think we're seeking cotton-candy self-care. People watch *Law and Order* reruns and isolate themselves because they're overwhelmed, so anything becomes too much. They seek quick routes to peace, but it's like empty carbs for the spirit. Tastes good, and the next second, you're hungry for more.

The alternative is to sit with the uncomfortable feelings, which is a trainable ability. As we learn to sit with more discomfort, we become more patient and tolerant, allowing us to eliminate adversarial relationships and form closer connections with less friction and meanness.

How can we learn to handle difficult emotions?

I call it equanimity training. Equanimity means accepting whatever happens with a calm, matter-of-factness. I'm okay if there's pleasure; I'm okay if there's pain. In *The Art of Flourishing*, I wrote about our obsession with happiness. Although it's nice that people are trying to cultivate positive emotions, eliminating discomfort reduces our tolerance for tough times.

> *"People act like pinballs in a machine, ricocheting off walls and lashing out with road rage and impatience towards loved ones."*

To expand your tolerance for uncomfortable feelings, start by focusing on less emotionally triggering things in your meditation practice. For example, learn to master sitting with increasingly uncomfortable sounds. Begin with a pleasant sound—hear it, let it wash over you. If your mind wanders, gently return your attention to the sound without judgment. Once you can do that, move to a neutral sound. Hear it. Let it wash over you. After mastering that, progress to an irritating sound, and eventually move to more challenging ones like a crying baby or a police siren.

Apply this practice to all five senses to develop presence, concentration and equanimity. Whether you're observing a beautiful flower or a war-torn village, the skill set remains the same. You're not numbing yourself; you're experiencing without clinging or attachment. Simply let it wash over you and remain open to the next moment, greeting the present with freshness. You can then apply this to your emotions. If you're scared, sit open to the experience, let it touch you and let it wash over you. This is a concrete way of calming ourselves.

What self-care measures do you recommend?

People have to live in two worlds simultaneously. They have to recognize what's wrong and continue pursuing what they value. Keep chasing your passions, spending time in nature, connecting with life-spirited people and supporting older relatives. Stay active and eat healthy. Prioritize quality rest and strive for a meaningful life.

Sandra Yeyati is national editor of Natural Awakenings.

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Smarter Summer Grilling

Making Barbecue More Flavorful and Healthy

by Maya Whitman

Summer would not be the same without dinner on the grill. For many Americans, backyard barbecuing is revered as an art form. In recent years, the classic menu of sizzling meats and charred corn on the cob has expanded to include healthier options such as plant-forward burgers, gut-friendly marinades and anti-inflammatory approaches that lower smoke points and use antioxidant-rich herbs and spices to reduce the formation of cancer-causing compounds.

Despite some evidence of an increased risk for colorectal, prostate and pancreatic cancer from high consumption of barbecued, well-done and fried foods, research published in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry* in 2018 highlights an increase of good gut bacteria from grilling (and roasting) compared to less heat-intense forms of cooking. Swapping out bottled sauces with questionable ingredients for healthy homemade marinades, avoiding blackened meats and embracing a broader food spectrum will lower health risks while satisfying every palate.

Mouthwatering Enhancements

"Rather than only sticking with the typical hot dogs or burgers at your next barbecue, try introducing some creativity into the mix," recommends Anne Mauney, a registered dietitian in Washington, D.C., and founder of the *FannetasticFood.com* recipe blog. "One of my favorite grilled meals is shrimp skewers with chimichurri [made with finely chopped parsley, minced garlic, oregano, olive oil, red wine vinegar and a sprinkle of red pepper flakes]. The chimichurri does double duty as a marinade and sauce, and it's incredibly fresh and delicious."

One of her favorite things to do is to serve proteins on ample salads, such as her Summer Grilled Corn and Peach Salad With Chicken on a bed of spring mix lettuce. The corn, peaches and chicken are all grilled, and the lightly sweet dressing (and marinade) is made with honey, lime and fresh cilantro.

For traditionalists that love grilled burgers, Mauney suggests adding chopped red bell peppers or shallots to healthier, leaner meats like grass-fed ground beef, turkey or chicken. She also likes introducing finely diced mushrooms into a beef burger patty to increase nutrient density (fiber plus vitamins) while making it more tender and juicy.

Meatless Options

Plant-based chef Julia Dunaway, in Azle, Texas, is influenced by her mother's Japanese heritage and cooking style, which included grilled ingredients and an unforgettable homemade teriyaki sauce. Dunaway's black bean burger cooked on the grill, griddle or grill pan, is topped with cashew cheese sauce and the usual burger toppings on a whole-grain bun. "This burger, served with grilled vegetables and even grilled potato slices, is better than any meat-heavy cookout," she asserts.

Other grilled favorites include Tex-Mex vegetable fajitas, large marinated mushrooms, zucchini and corn on the cob. Grilling eggplant sprinkled with cumin, asparagus with fresh garlic and stone fruits like peaches, plums and nectarines with cinnamon or ground cloves are delicious ways to pile anti-inflammatory goodness onto summer plates.

Healthy, Flavor-Boosting Hacks

According to *Oncology Nursing News*, grilling meat at high temperatures or over an open flame can produce cancer-causing substances called heterocyclic amines (HCAs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). To reduce the risk of carcinogen formation, cooking over indirect heat is recommended. Eating charred meat should be avoided. Marinating meat for 20 to 30 minutes before cooking can also keep the surface of the meat from getting too hot. Adding antioxidant- and polyphenol-rich herbs like basil, rosemary and mint along with citrus juices or vinegar will provide great flavor, as well as disease-fighting nutrients.

When brushing ingredients with oil, avocado oil is recommended for its health benefits and high smoke point. Olive oil is also nutrient-dense, flavorful and anti-inflammatory. Dunaway's favorite marinade replaces oil with tahini, a sesame-seed paste, and incorporates plenty of herbs and spices with vegetable broth to keeps vegetables moist throughout grilling.

"I use a gas grill with a large grilling surface, making sure it is very clean. Heating the grill on high for several minutes and cleaning the grates is essential. The marinated vegetables and tofu won't stick on a clean grill," Dunaway explains. "Once clean, reduce the heat to medium to avoid charring, while still getting a light grill mark. Just plan to cook the vegetables on a lower heat for a longer time so they are tender and cooked throughout."

Jazzing things up with probiotic-rich sides, including colorful slaws and fermented kimchi or kraut adds another healthy, tasty dimension. Swap everyday potatoes for sweet potatoes and drizzle with a tangerine vinaigrette for a different twist on potato salad or toss chickpeas with kalamata olives and feta. Creative pairings are the heart of a good grill, and the sky's the limit.

Maya Whitman is a frequent writer for Natural Awakenings.

THE BEST BLACK BEAN BURGERS

YIELD: 8 BURGERS

1 cup oats
1 cup walnut pieces
1 cup red onion, finely chopped
⅔ cup cremini mushrooms, chopped
½ cup red bell pepper, chopped
½ cup carrots, diced
2 Tbsp jalapeño peppers, chopped
3 cups home-cooked black beans (or 2 cans, rinsed and drained)
2 Tbsp ground flaxseeds
2 Tbsp nutritional yeast
1 tsp onion powder
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp paprika
2 tsp seasoning blend (such as Kirkland Signature No Salt Seasoning)
2 tsp low sodium soy sauce
1 tsp kosher salt
1 cup cooked brown rice

Pulse the oats and walnuts in a food processor until finely ground. Set aside.

In a large skillet, over medium-high heat, sauté the onion, mushrooms, bell peppers, carrots and jalapeño peppers until lightly browned. Add a little water. Cover and cook for 5 minutes.

Add the beans to the walnut and oat mixture in the food processor along with the ground flaxseeds, nutritional yeast, onion powder, garlic powder, paprika, seasoning blend, soy sauce and salt. Pulse a few times. Use a silicone spatula to distribute the ingredients and pulse again once or twice. Keep some of the beans chunky.

Remove the mixture from the food processor, add the cooked brown rice and mix well with the spatula. Divide into 8 patties using a ½ cup measuring cup. Place the patties on a cleaned grill, on indirect heat (medium), and cook for 10 minutes on each side.

Serve on whole-grain buns with any desired toppings such as lettuce, sliced tomatoes, pickles, onions, avocado and condiments like ketchup or mustard.

Recipe courtesy of Chef Julia Dunaway.

GRILLED FAJITA VEGETABLES AND TOFU WITH MARINADE

YIELD: 2 TO 3 SERVINGS

MARINADE

2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp cumin
1 tsp Mexican oregano
1 tsp red chili powder
1 Tbsp tahini
2 Tbsp lime juice
1 Tbsp low sodium soy sauce
1 cup low sodium vegetable broth

VEGETABLES

2 portobello mushrooms, stems removed, sliced into strips
1-2 bell peppers, sliced into large pieces
2 cups zucchini or summer squash, sliced
1 sweet onion, sliced
1 white or sweet potato, baked or steamed ahead and cooled, sliced
Jalapeño peppers to taste
Other in-season vegetables, especially eggplant and okra
1 16-oz block of super-firm tofu

Mix the marinade ingredients and place in a large measuring cup.

Place the vegetables (except the baked potatoes) in a shallow baking dish or gallon-sized plastic bag and add about half of the marinade. Allow the vegetables to marinate in the refrigerator for 30 minutes to 2 hours.

Cover the block of tofu with the remaining marinade, reserving a quarter cup to be used later. Place the marinating tofu in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes, then cut it into 8 slices.

Heat a gas or charcoal grill to medium heat (high heat will burn the vegetables). Grill the tofu 3 to 4 minutes on each side. Grill the vegetables on one side for 3 to 4 minutes or until grill marks appear, then turn them over and reduce the heat to low.

Brush the vegetables with the reserved marinade and close the grill or cover the vegetables with a dome lid or foil tent. Continue grilling the vegetables until they are tender but not burned, basting them a couple more times with the remaining marinade.

Serve the grilled tofu and vegetables on a large platter with flour tortillas, guacamole, salsa and beans on the side.

Recipe courtesy of Chef Julia Dunaway

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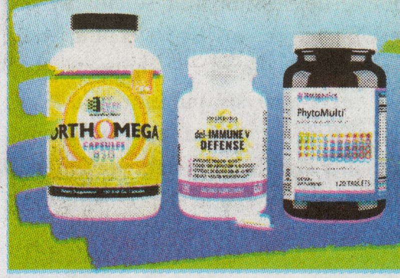

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Sleep Health for Men

Foundational Habits for a Better Life

by Hannah Tytus

"Wherever you want to make improvements in your life, whether it is with your health, your job performance or your relationships—sleep can be part of that," says Catherine Darley, ND, an integrative sleep specialist and founder of *SkilledSleeper.com.*

Better sleep enhances nearly every aspect of life, yet many men ignore the subject entirely. "There's a lack of information about sleep health in men's spaces," Darley laments. "Subjectively, men have fewer complaints than women do about their sleep, but on some objective measures, men sleep worse." Most people need between seven and nine hours of shuteye nightly, but the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 37 percent of men fall short.

Effects of Poor Sleep

Precipitous Aging: "Midlife men have higher rates of obstructive sleep apnea, which negatively affects heart health and significantly increases the risk of stroke and heart attack," says Darley. "Alzheimer's risk, arthritis and many physical and digestive complaints are worse when sleep is disordered. During sleep, the brain undergoes vital nightly maintenance, clearing beta amyloid plaques associated with Alzheimer's. A way to hedge against dementia is to get good sleep now."

Hormonal Issues: Hormones are linked to sleep quality. "During stage 3 sleep (also known as deep sleep) 75 to 80 percent of our growth hormone is secreted, which supports muscle repair and recovery. Exercise improves your deep sleep, helping keep your muscle mass," Darley explains. "Disrupted sleep from apnea, insomnia or irregular schedules can lower testosterone, causing issues like erectile dysfunction." A 2020 study in *Translational Andrology and Urology* reported that older men with sleep disorders exhibited a higher risk of erectile dysfunction.

Mental Health Strain: Poor sleep often leads to mental health issues. "Anxiety, loneliness, depression and suicidality are worse when a person isn't sleeping well," Darley asserts. Research supports this: a 2021 meta-analysis published in *Sleep Medicine Reviews* found that enhancing sleep quality significantly improved mental health indicators such as depression, anxiety and rumination.

Relationship Difficulties: "Emotional intelligence is partly based on how well you're sleeping," says Darley, noting that a person that hasn't slept well will struggle to identify a partner's subtle facial expressions, making it hard to determine if they are happy or angry. "Sleep-deprived people are also much more self-centered in their moral reasoning, causing them to become less flexible, more rule-based and pedantic," she adds. When these patterns become habitual, they can harm important relationships.

Driving Accidents: "Sleep affects your balance, coordination and reaction time," Darley says. A sleep deficit can be particularly unsafe if someone is behind the wheel. "If you are chronically sleep-restricted, you're driving impaired. Compared to drunk driving, drowsy driving is much more likely to be fatal." According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, crashes caused by drowsy driving often involve a single driver running off the road at a high rate of speed with no evidence of braking.

Diminished Mental Acuity: Cognitive performance suffers when sleep is compromised, affecting everything from basic memory recall to complex problem-solving. According to Darley, even verbal fluency is affected, making simple conversations difficult and important dates easy to forget. Making matters worse, "We become unaware of how impaired we actually are," she points out. "After several nights of poor sleep, we say, 'I think I'm getting used to this,' even though we are still impaired."

Resetting Our Internal Clock

Most people adapt to sleep deprivation and may not realize what their true sleep requirements are. Darley suggests the "10 by 10 test", which involves spending 10 hours in bed for 10 consecutive nights in a dark, quiet room to determine how much sleep the body naturally needs. "After discovering how much sleep your body needs, the next step is scheduling it into your life," she counsels. "Consistency is crucial. Increased sleep variability relates to mortality." Aim for consistent sleep with no more than a 30-minute variation in bedtime and wake time, and no more than a one-hour difference in total sleep duration throughout the week.

Our circadian rhythm is the body's internal 24-hour clock that regulates sleepiness and alertness. It is primarily influenced by light exposure. Morning sunlight suppresses melatonin—the hormone that induces sleep—while darkness triggers its release. According to Darley, we suffer from what she calls a "darkness deficiency" that confuses the body's sleep signals. "We're suppressing our melatonin until bedtime with screens and LED light," she explains.

To counteract this, she recommends creating a "sunset experience" at home by reducing light to the equivalent of 10 candles' worth of yellow-hued light one to two hours before bed. The bedroom should be very dark, for which Darley offers a simple test. "If you can hold your hand out at arm's length and see your fingers wiggling, that's enough light to suppress your melatonin, keeping you awake," she says.

Other habits support a healthy sleep rhythm. Exercise earlier in the day helps regulate the body clock. Sleep masks and blackout curtains can reduce light pollution in urban areas. Limiting alcohol and avoiding caffeine in the evening prevents disruptions. A cooler bedroom also promotes better sleep. There are about 60 sleep disorders, say Darley. If sleep does not improve after a month of these lifestyle adjustments, she recommends seeing a professional. Sleep is not a luxury—it's essential.

Hannah Tytus is an integrative health coach, former writer at the National Institutes of Health and host of the Root Shock podcast, exploring the cultural underpinnings of health.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3

Take a Pause for Well-Being – 8am-1pm. a low-stakes, come-as-you-are kind of morning, set among the seasonal blooms of the W.E. Upjohn Peony Garden. Free. Nichols Arboretum, 1610 Washington Heights, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

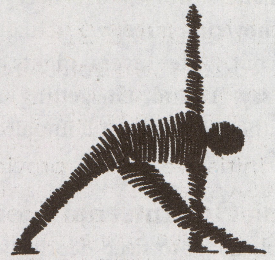
SATURDAY, JUNE 6

Summer Birding at Watkins Lake – 8-10am. Watkins Lake is one of Park Naturalist, Kelsey's favorite places to spot Mockingbirds. All levels. 14801 Arnold Rd, Brooklyn. Registration required: Washtenaw.org.

29th Annual African American – 9am-8pm. Listen to entertainment, shop vendors, grab some food and have fun with community. Free. E Ann & Main, 4th Ave & Huron St, Ann Arbor. Facebook.com/AnnArborAADF.

Peony Sale – June 6-7. 10am-4:30pm. Shop many varieties found in the historic W.E. Upjohn Peony Garden. Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

Wonder Walk at the Arb: The Wonder of Peonies – June 6-7. 11am-12pm. A broad overview of the garden and



the many stories peonies can tell through color, fragrance, petal forms and names. Free. Nichols Arboretum, 1610 Washington Heights, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

SUNDAY, JUNE 7

VegMichigan's Spring Vegfest – 10am-4pm. Includes nearly 100 vendors; delicious plant-based food; sustainable shopping; live cooking demos; free samples; Kid Zone. Eastern Market, Sheds 5 & 6, 2810 Russell St, Detroit. VegMichigan.org.

MONDAY, JUNE 8

Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc. Flower Show – 8am-4pm. Horticulture, floral designs, botanical arts and garden-related photography. Free. Double Tree Hotel by Hilton, 3600 Plymouth Rd, Ann Arbor. MIGardenClubs.org.

Open Stage – 8pm. Take your music to the masses. Open Stage nights offer supportive audiences and a terrific space. Performers have 8 mins (or 2 songs) each to do their thing. $3, free/members, students. The Ark, 316 S Main St, Ann Arbor. TheArk.org.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10

Reciprocity as a Natural System: How Human Communities Mirror Healthy Ecosystems – 6:30-8pm. Seasonal cycles, species interactions and indigenous concepts of reciprocity can all lead us to create a community of mutual support. Free. County Farm Park, 2230 Platt Rd, Ann Arbor. AnnArbor.WildOnes.org.

THURSDAY, JUNE 11

Golden Hour Nature Hike 7:30-8:30pm. The golden glow at the end of the day has proven benefits to health and well-being, including

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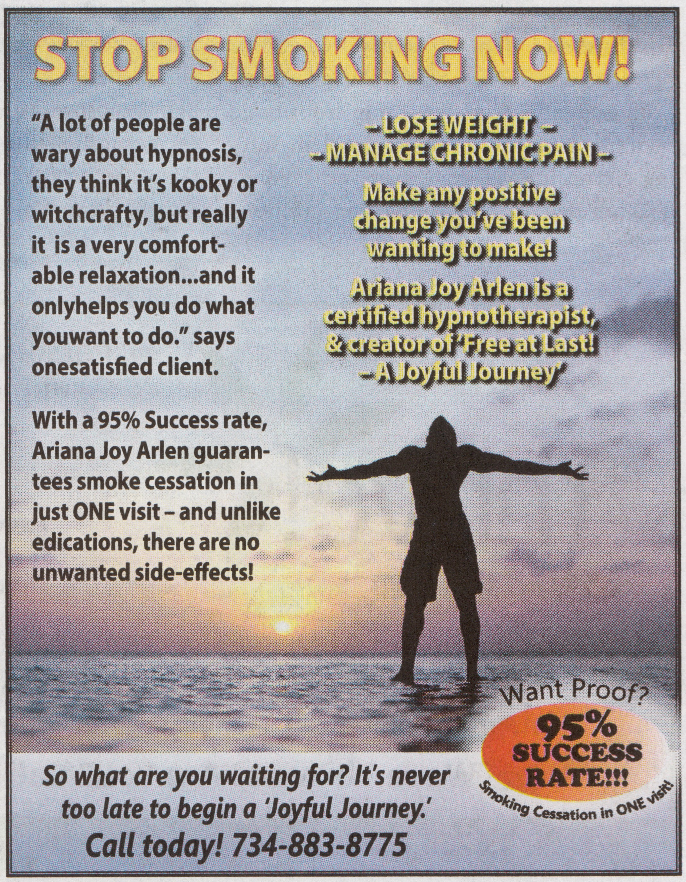


reduced stress and better sleep. Naturalist-guided hike. Free. County Farm Park, 2230 Platt Rd, Ann Arbor. Washtenaw.org.

FRIDAY, JUNE 12

Mindful Yoga with Meditation Workshop – 7-8:30pm. In this gentle workshop, we'll combine movement, breath work, mindfulness and meditation to cultivate the many benefits associated with a mindful meditation practice. All fitness and experience levels. Theme: Chakra Balance. $3-/$35. Crysterra Wellness, Dexter Early Education Complex, Beacon Gym, 7480 Dan Hoey, Dexter. 734-649-1849. DexterSchools.ce.eleyo.com.

SATURDAY, JUNE 13

Day of Analytical Meditation – 10am-5pm. With Demo Rinpoche. Learn what meditation means in daily practice. Also includes yoga, music and prayers. All welcome. Free. Jewel Heart Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center, 1129 Oak Valley Dr, Ann Arbor. 734-994-3387. JewelHeart.org.

SUNDAY, JUNE 14

Wonder Walk: Bonsai – 1-2:30pm. Learn about the history, aesthetics and care of these carefully shaped trees while taking a closer look at selections from the bonsai collection. Free. Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

Bonsai Demonstration – 1-3pm. Join Bonsai Specialist, Carmen Leskoviansky, for a bonsai demonstration and discussion featuring Satsuki Azalea. Free. Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

> **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**
>
> **SATURDAY, JUNE 20**
>
> **Agri-Fest 2026** – 9am–2pm. A community marketplace featuring local food, art, farmers and makers while raising funds for the Our Neighbor's Basket initiative, which provides weekly CSA meal kits to Chelsea residents. Free. Agricole Farm Stop, 118 N Main St, Chelsea. Shana@AgricoleFarmStop.com or Melanie@AgricoleFarmStop.com. Visit AgricoleFarmStop.com.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17

Open Stage – 8pm. Take your music to the masses. Open Stage nights offer supportive audiences and a terrific space. Performers have 8 mins (or 2 songs) each to do their thing. $3, free/members, students. The Ark, 316 S Main St, Ann Arbor. TheArk.org.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18

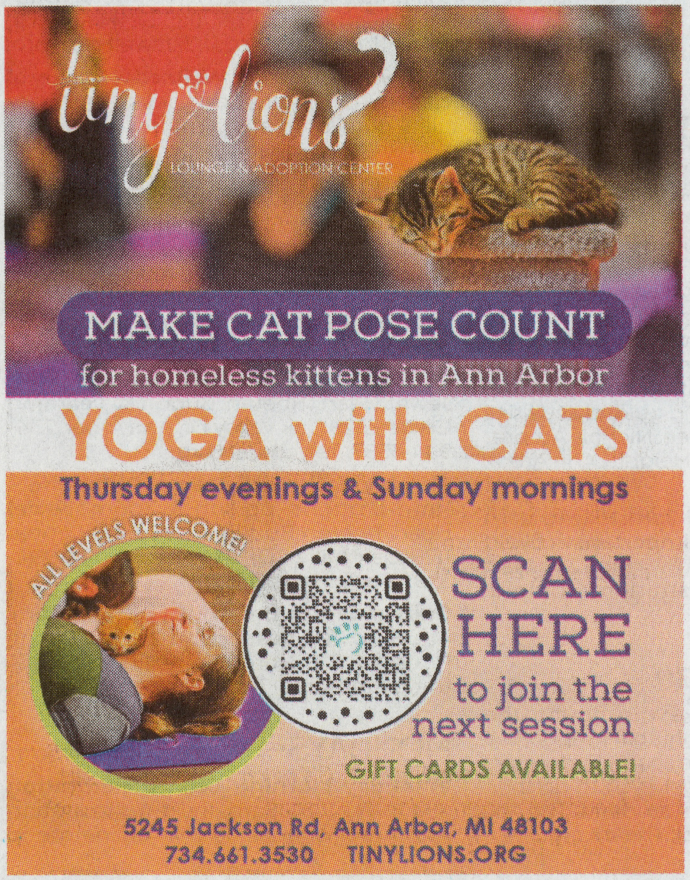
Moth Night at Iron Creek Preserve – 9-11pm. Join local entomologist and educator David Cappaert for an evening of nighttime exploration as we observe and learn about the diverse moth species that call this preserve home. Iron Creek Nature Preserve, 11703 Noggles Rd, Manchester. LegacyLandConservancy.org.

FRIDAY, JUNE 19

BLKBOK – 8pm. A Juneteenth Celebration! $29/$40. The Ark, 316 S Main St, Ann Arbor. TheArk.org.

SATURDAY, JUNE 20

Agri-Fest 2026 – 9am–2pm. A community marketplace featuring local food, art, farmers and makers while raising funds for the



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Our Neighbor's Basket initiative, which provides weekly CSA meal kits to Chelsea residents. Free. Agricole Farm Stop, 118 N Main St, Chelsea. Shana@AgricoleFarmStop.com or Melanie@AgricoleFarmStop.com. Visit AgricoleFarmStop.com.

TUESDAY, JUNE 23

Artist Spotlight: Ian Flanigan – 8pm. Progressive folk guitar. Free; please bring a nonperishable food donation for Food Gatherers. The Ark, 316 S Main St, Ann Arbor. TheArk.org.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24

Bumblebee Survey – 1-3pm. Hike to learn about the beauty and importance of wild pollinators. Draper Houston, 578 Mooreville Rd, Milan. Registration required: Washtenaw.org.

Wonder Walk: Summer Solstice – 5-6:30pm. Explore the trails looking for the sights and listening for the sounds of summer. Free. Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N Dixboro Rd, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27

Big Play Day – 10am-2pm. A family-friendly event offering dynamic outdoor play opportunities, open-ended nature explorations and guided activities suitable for all ages. Free. Nichols Arboretum, 1610 Washington Heights, Ann Arbor. mbgna.umich.edu.

Bumblebee Survey – 1-3pm. Hike to learn about the beauty and importance of wild pollinators. County Farm Park, 2230 Platt Rd, Ann Arbor. Registration required: Washtenaw.org.

MONDAY, JUNE 29

Open Stage – 8pm. Take your music to the masses. Open Stage nights offer supportive audiences and a terrific space. Performers have 8 mins (or 2 songs) each to do their thing. $3, free/members, students. The Ark, 316 S Main St, Ann Arbor. TheArk.org.

DAILY

Free Online Programs – Practical Buddhism, Healing and Compassion Meditation, Group Practice, White Tara Guided Healing Meditation, Sunday Talks. Jewel Heart Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center: 734-994-3387. JewelHeart.org.

Natural Medicine Training Registration – 9:30am-4pm. Begins in Sept; Fri and Sat once a month through July, during the second weekend. Certification series focusing on the core aspects of Natural Medicine practice. Mary Light Natural Medicine, 3684 W Liberty Rd, Ann Arbor. 734-769-7794. NaturopathicSchoolOfAnnArbor.net.

Therapeutic & Sports Massage Special – Thru June. Paul Bohlman is recognizing local police officers and firefighters with a 25% discount on massage services. The Box Building, 425 Boardman Ave, Traverse City. 231-632-1807. PaulBohlman.com.

Tiny Lions Lounge & Adoption Center (TLC) – 12-7pm, Wed-Sun. Offers feline-friendly activities with kittens and cats available to take home. 5245 Jackson Rd, Ste A1, 734-661-3575. TinyLions.org.

WEEKLY

Jewel Heart Ann Arbor Programs – Includes courses, weekly meditation and social activities. Jewel Heart Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center, 1129 Oak Valley Dr, Ann Arbor. 734-994-3387. JewelHeart.org.

Yoga with Crysterra Wellness – Variety of classes Tues-Thurs. Cost varies. For schedule & details: CrysterraWellness.com.

SUNDAYS

Hudson Valley Humane Society Rescue Reading – 10am-12pm. Includes humane education lessons, group read-aloud and dog meet-and-greet. Drop-off event. $10; space limited. HSHV.org/RescueReading.

White Tara Guided Healing Meditation – 10:30-11:30am. In-person & Zoom. Free. Jewel Heart Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center, 1129 Oak Valley Dr, Ann Arbor. 734-994-3387. JewelHeart.org.

Sunday Talk with Demo Rinpoche – 11am-12pm. In-person & Zoom. Jewel Heart Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center, 1129 Oak Valley Dr, Ann Arbor. 734-994-3387. JewelHeart.org.

Guided Group Breathwork – 6-7:30pm. 4th Sun. See description above. Dzanc House, 402 S Huron St, Ypsilanti. Registration required: ThisBreath.com.

MONDAYS

Weekday Morning Online Meditation – Mon-Fri. 7:30-8am. Insight Meditation Ann Arbor offers a 30-min online group

sitting via Zoom. Free; donations gratefully accepted. InsightMeditation AnnArbor.org.

Mindful Dexter – 12-12:30pm. Last Mon. A short 30-min guided meditation that is a simple and practical mindfulness tune-up that you can access from wherever you are. Zoom. Tinyurl.com/mindfuldexter.

TUESDAYS

Senior Discount Tuesdays: Castle Remedies – Customers over the age of 65 can receive a 10% discount on their in-store purchases. In the Parkway Center, 2345 S Huron Pkwy, Ann Arbor. 734-973-8990. CastleRemedies.com.

Neverending Lam of Liberation – 7-8:30pm. With Demo Rinpoche. In-person & Zoom. Jewel Heart Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center, 1129 Oak Valley Dr, Ann Arbor. 734-994-3387. JewelHeart.org.

Hatha-Flow Yoga for Wellness – 7:30-8:30pm. Beginner/Level 1; Intermediate/Level 2. Moderately challenging yoga practice. Suitable for those with a moderate fitness level, some yoga experience helpful but not necessary. In-person or online. $14/class. Crysterra Wellness, Dexter Early Education Complex, Beacon Gym, 7480 Dan Hoey, Dexter. 734-649-1849. Tinyurl.com/3fw4ezrm.

WEDNESDAYS

CEW+Inspire Midweek Mindfulness Guided Sit – 12:15-12:45pm. This virtual community of practice is open to all, whether new to mindfulness or seeking to deepen an existing practice. Registration is simple; sign up once to receive ongoing access to weekly Zoom sessions. Cew.Umich.edu.

THURSDAYS

Farm Stand – 9am-4pm. Thurs & Fri. Offering self-serve. Green Things Farm Collective, 3825 Nixon Rd, Ann Arbor. 734-772-1418. GreenThingsFarm.com.

Class Observation – 11-11:30am. Also Fri. Ann Arbor School of Massage, Herbal and Natural Medicine, 3684 W Liberty Rd, Ann Arbor. RSVP: 734-769-7794. Naturopathic SchoolOfAnnArbor.net.

Beginner Tai Chi – 6-7:15pm. A series of postures linked together in fluid manner. Focuses on relaxation in motion, balance and the mind/body connection. Can attend one or both sessions per week (Mon morning &/or Thurs evening). $195. Peaceful Dragon School, 1945 Pauline Blvd, Ste B, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0695. PeacefulDragonSchool.com.

Mindful Dexter – 7:30-8pm. 3rd Thurs. A short 30-min guided meditation that is a simple and practical mid-month mindfulness tune-up that you can access from wherever you are. Zoom. Tinyurl.com/mindfuldexter.

Gentle Restorative Yoga for Stress & Anxiety Relief – 7:30-8:30pm. Beginner/Level 1. Create harmony and balance of body and mind through physical postures, breathing techniques and an extended guided relaxation at the end of class. In-person & online. $14/class. Crysterra Wellness, Dexter Early Education Complex, Beacon Gym, 7480 Dan Hoey, Dexter. 734-649-1849. Tinyurl.com/4u9e7jsm.

FRIDAYS

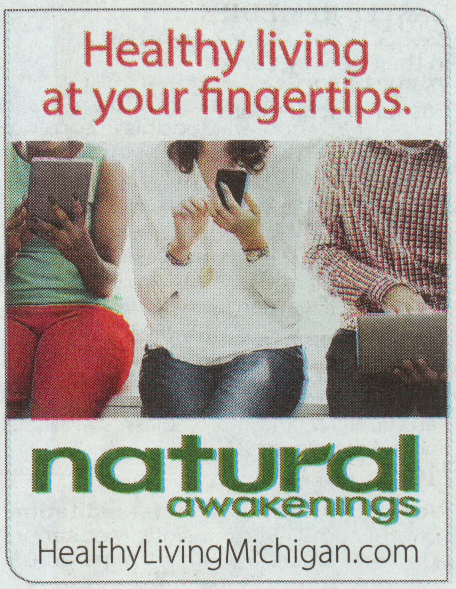
Monthly Women's Circle – 6:30-8pm. 2nd Fri. A safe and supportive circle to come together to build skills, process emotions, connect with others and foster sisterhood. The circle offers guidance, laughter, sharing, growth and strength in community. $25. Alchemy Holistic Collective, 105 E Middle St, Chelsea. 734-210-1922. Alchemy HolisticCollective.com.

SATURDAYS

Saline Outdoor Farmers Market – Thru Nov 8. 8am-12pm. 100 S Ann Arbor St, Parking Lot 4, Saline. SalineMI.gov.

Mindful Dexter – 9:30-10:30am. 2nd Sat. Includes a 25-30-min guided meditation, a few minutes of silent meditation, followed by time for comments/questions and a discussion on a mindfulness topic. Dexter Library, 3255 Alpine St, Dexter. 734-476-8474. Tinyurl.com/mindfuldexter.

Herbal Medicine Open House – 12-1pm. 3rd Sat. Experience the herbs, relax in the classroom, have some tea. Open house to share program literature, meet and give details of training to aspiring Herbalists, Kitchen Medicine Makers, and seekers of independent wellness. Free. Dexter Natural Health Center, 3255 Central St, Dexter. 734-769-7794. NalturopathicSchoolOfAnnArbor.net.



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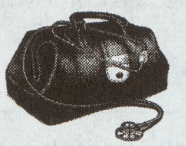

Malcolm Sickels earned his M.D. from the University of Michigan, where he taught fellow medical students about different approaches to health. Board certified in Family Medicine and Holistic Medicine, he is in solo practice on the west side of Ann Arbor. Learn more at Dr. Sickels.com. *See ads pages 10 and 16.*

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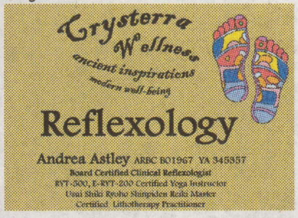
CrysterraWellness.com



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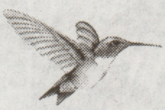

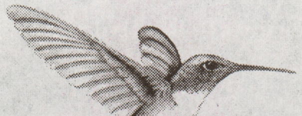

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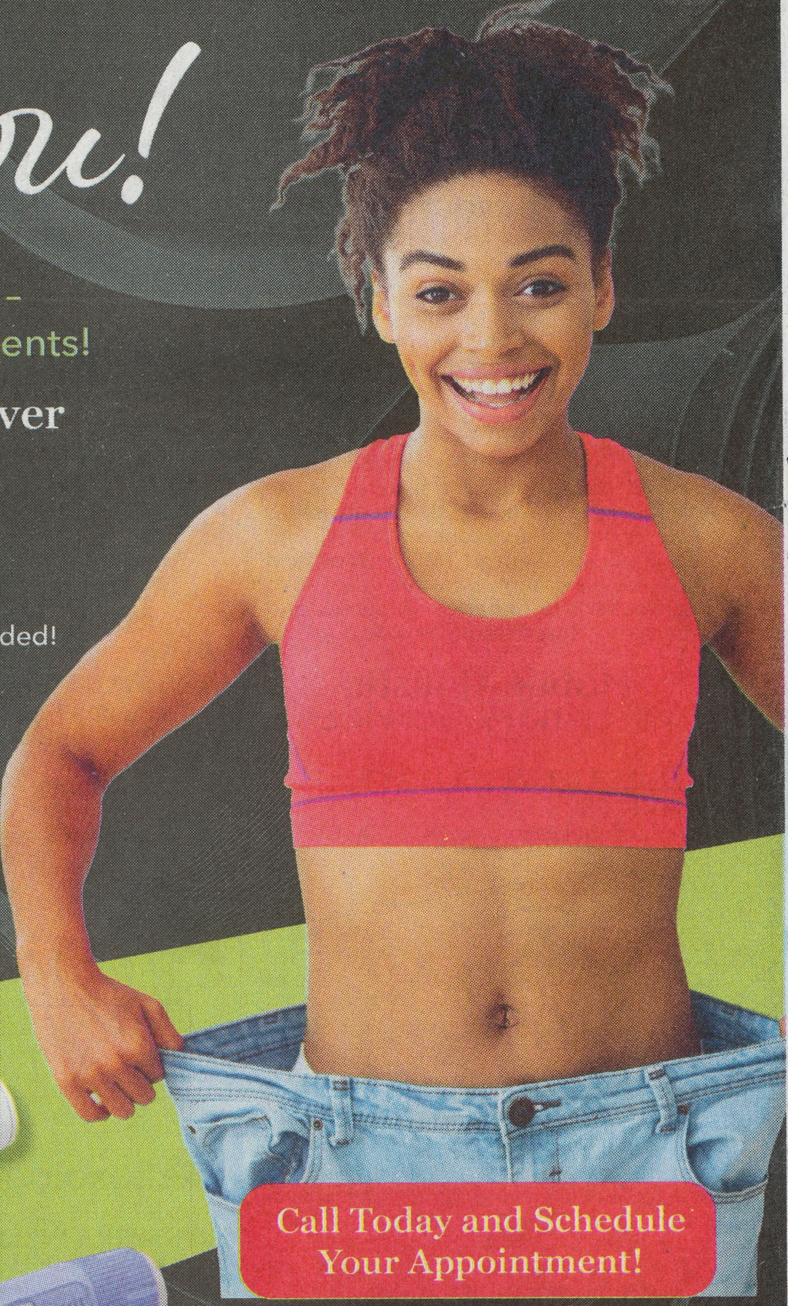

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